

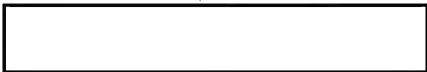
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10 May 1952


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CURRENT INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

DOCUMENT NO. 66
NO CHANGE IN CLASS. X
11 DECLASSIFIED
CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S 2007
NEXT REVIEW DATE: 12-19-79
AUTH: HR 70-2
DATE 12-19-79 REVIEWER: 

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State Department review completed

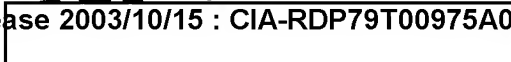
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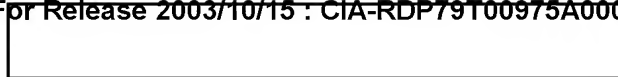
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NEAR EAST - AFRICA



4. Egyptian Interior Minister criticizes Hilali:

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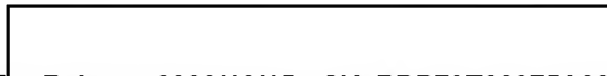


The Egyptian Minister of Interior, Maraghi Bey, who wishes to become Prime Minister Hilali's successor, is critical of Hilali's legalistic mentality, his lack of forceful leadership and his failure to win popular support.

Maraghi Bey says that he is ready to take over if Anglo-Egyptian talks break down, and states that he plans to ask the United States to become an equal ally in the defense of the Suez Canal and to help Egypt rebuild its army. This is to be done through the United Nations and with limited British participation. Maraghi also plans to open direct negotiations with the leader of the anti-Egyptian Umma Party in the Sudan; he believes that the British cannot prevent his doing so.

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Comment: Maraghi's plan, which would undoubtedly be strongly opposed by Britain, is in line with the frequently expressed Egyptian opinion that the United States should actively help settle the Anglo-Egyptian dispute. His plan to negotiate with the Sudanese will meet with firm opposition from British officials in the Sudan.

Maraghi, who also holds the key portfolios of War and Marine, has recently placed his own appointees in almost all the top positions of the Interior Ministry, which is responsible for maintaining order throughout Egypt.

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WESTERN EUROPE

6. De Gasperi wants final Trieste solution before Italian general elections:

Premier de Gasperi has warned Ambassador Bunker that although "some progress" was made on the recent London talks on Trieste,

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this will "only tide things over." He stated that a final settlement must be attained within the next seven or eight months, prior to the parliamentary elections, if a democratic government is to survive in Italy.


De Gasperi declared that the neo-Fascists and Communists are exploiting the Trieste question to the utmost; he implied that for an Italo-Yugoslav settlement, American help would be necessary.

Comment: The recent Trieste crisis has further increased political extremism in Italy on both the right and left, to the detriment of the democratic center.

The time limit mentioned by De Gasperi is the most authoritative indication thus far as to the government's plans regarding the date of the general parliamentary elections. Meanwhile, municipal elections in south Italy on 25 May will provide a fairly reliable indication of the national political trend.

7. West Germans favor US proposal for four-power talks:

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 Representatives of all principal West German parties have approved the United States proposal for four-power conversations on German unity, as carried in the press. The coalition parties, however, specify that the talks should take place only after the European Defense Community treaty and the Allied-German contractual agreement have been signed, though they do not feel that prior announcement of the talks would postpone the signing. The Social Democratic Party would prefer the four-power meeting first, since it might delay ratification of the treaties long enough to prevent their "favorable sides" from being exploited by the government in the 1953 elections.

It is believed in some coalition quarters that if the West does not take the initiative on the unity question along the lines of the US proposal, the USSR might resort to military threats and pressure on Berlin to bring about four-power talks.

The US High Commission believes that the leak of the American proposal has helped convince the Germans that the United States has not closed the door on German unity, and notes evidence of a "wholesome anxiety" that the US may have an alternative policy to integration.